3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 F223 Shilluk F223

535 circle. Then the girls rush into this ring, each looking out for the man she intends to favour. She draws up in front of him, so that they look each other in the face; again two or four rows are formed, and the same dance begins anew, accompanied by drumming and singing.

The dances are in many cases repeated on four successive afternoons or nights; on the fourth day they frequently end in quarrels or real fights. The cause of this is the young men of one village casting their eyes on the girls of another village, and thus arousing jealousy. In such fights clubs are used, in exceptional cases also spears.

535 541 [Of a great war-play which was performed in honour of the missionaries, Dr. Gillan in "The Egyptian Sudan" gives the following description: "The first intimation we had of their coming, or rather of their presence, was a whoop and the sound of a horn that sent a chill, and kept it shooting up and down the spinal column. We rushed out on the verandah, and saw at the foot of our hill, and only a few rods away, that the clans had assembled. There were about one hundred men and boys with their spears and war clubs, their bodies shining with oil, and their spears shining from vigorous rubbing, while their faces were hideous with white and red paint of brick-dust and ashes. They kept leaping in the air, yelling and blowing that soul-sickening horn. Little by little they came toward us, stooping low, hiding behind trees, gliding back and forth until they were in front of the house. Then I stepped out and smiled at them, while suddenly with a yell that was not earthly, they sprang in the air, the first line made as if throwing the spear, and suddenly dropped down for the following ranks. Again they all sprang up into the air, yelling, dancing, singing, and brandishing spears, then circled around the house and attacked from another quarter.

These manœuvres were kept up for some time, and they grew more excited and more wild all the while. Then, at a command from their chief, they ceased and began to dance. Dancing with the Shulla (Shilluk) means jumping up and down in the same spot, accompanied with a sort of chanting sing-song, throwing the arms over their heads and flourishing spears and clubs.

Again they formed in line of battle, five ranks deep, with a front of twenty, each man with spear and shield. The horn sounded the advance, and away they charged to the Doctor's house. They seemed to get the very spirit of murder in their faces. They charged in good order; the front rank, striking at an imaginary foe, dropped to their knees to allow the other ranks to strike over their heads, and then the horn sounded the

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 F323 Shilluk F323

retreat. Around our house they went in a regular stampede, and forming in a line again in front of the house for another charge.

This they repeated a number of times. Then a crowd of women, who had followed their husbands and sweethearts to battle, seized the part of fire, only to be overcome by the brave warriors and driven back. This part was very amusing. One old lady with great bravery marched out and charged, using her pipe as her weapon. The men were a bit rough in driving her back, and she was evidently afraid her dear pipe would come to grief, so she took it inside our house and when next we saw her she was in the thick of a fray with a long wand as her weapon of offence and defence".]

The dry season is also the time for travelling. Relatives pay mutual visits, and marriageable young men go to the Nuers and Dinkas with spears, wire, cattle, and dura, which they exchange for ebony and calves.

IV. RELIGION.

In the religion of the Shilluks three components are clearly distinguishable: 1. *Juok (Juòk)* or God; 2. *Nyikang (Nyìkaŋ)*, the progenitor and national hero of the Shilluks; 3. *ajwogo (ajwɔ̀gɔ)*, the witch doctor or sorcerer. These three do not exist separate from each other, but have many relations amongst one another. There are still other forms of religious service, but they are not so prominent as the three mentioned.

"*Juok (Juòk)* is a supreme being, residing above". Whether he is regarded as creator is not sure. According to the sayings of some natives he surely is, but it seems probable that this belief, if there is such a one, is young, and must be traced back to Mohammedan or Christian influences. — On certain occasions an ox is killed as a sacrifice to *Juok*, though this is done more frequently to *Nyikang*; prayers are also offered to *Juok*, but according to my information, they have only one prayer to *Juok* (for which vide page 171), while to *Nyikang* there are many. "Praying" to *Juok* is expressed by a different word from that which serves for designating a prayer to *Nyikang*; the first is *lieny* "to pray"; its original meaning is probably: to conjure. In praying to *Nyikang* loosely "to ask for, to beg" is used. While the prayers to *Nyikang* are sung, and accompanied by dances, that one to *Juok* is only spoken, not sung, and not accompanied by dancing. *Juok* has no visible symbols or temples, nor are the prayers to him offered by a priest or sorcerer, but by the *chief* or village-elder.

In the heart and mind of the Shilluk *Juok* does not possess a deep-rooted rank. In some way they do attribute good and evil to him, and chiefly the

of the newly elected *reth* Nyikang and Dak are brought in procession from Abwoc to Fashoda with their priests to test the new *reth*.

The conventional opposition between northern and southern divisions now becomes apparent. The forces of the southern province flock to support the *reth*-elect and wait at Detaile settlement while Nyikang and his supporters assemble at Akodo. The two armies then march to Kher Arwajur and a mock battle takes place with millet stalks instead of spears. Nyikang captures the *reth*-elect and there is a procession to the shrine of Nyikang at Fashoda. Certain ceremonies of a mystic nature follow, which are not participated in by the whole people, as are the procession and battle. The image of Nyikang is placed on the royal stool, then the king-elect sits on it and the spirit of Nyikang is believed to enter into him, and possess him causing him to tremble.

A few days later a second mock battle occurs between the king's supporters and Nyikang. The *reth* is victorious, for Nyikang has taken possession of him and the effigy is now merely the symbol of Nyikang and no longer the repository of his spirit. In a final ceremony all the important chiefs and elders from all parts of Shillukland declare their allegiance to the new *reth*.

The installation ceremonies of the *reth* and the traditions relating to Nyikang show how, at every point, the structure and political organization of the Shilluk people is confirmed by ritual and by mystic symbols.

All rebellions and revolts are directed against the king in person and not against the kingship itself. The unity of the Shilluk is such that the various segments of the country can be represented by the common symbol of the *reth*-ship. Nevertheless, there are powerful tendencies towards fission within the structure. As has been shown, the kingship is the subject of competition on the part of the *eyiveth* candidates supported by chiefs and forces available from their territories.

Of all the Nilotic groups for which there is any considerable information, the Shilluk alone form a single political unit, or nation, as opposed to a number of separate tribes or tribal groups which are culturally similar but not politically unified. At the same time, the principles of their political structure and social organization are similar in many respects to those of the rest of the Nilotes, in particular the Anuak.

AGE SETS

Apart from a brief mention by Hofmayr, the only information concerning the Shilluk age sets is contained in Hassell's article in *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1941, Vol.XXIV.

On reaching puberty a Shilluk boy is initiated into the age-set organization. A Shilluk age set is known as *rio* and is made up of three or more subdivisions each consisting of men of approximately the same age, who have herded cattle together as boys. A man always remains in the subdivision into which he has been initiated, but a periodical shuffling of the subdivisions alters their respective positions in an age set and the whole age-set organization. A reorganization of the groups of subdivisions

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shiliuk FJ23

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5.—The battle between the two armies outside Pashuda.

6.—After the battle the raft is towed by Nyikang and led off to Pashuda. The raft is commanded by Nyikang.

[FACING P 60]

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 [778] Just as the king's party was sighted, four men came out of Fashoda carrying the sacred shield and spear of Nyikang. As Nyikang and Dak approached this group there was something of a scuffle, as if the shield and spear were loath to join the procession. But after a short sham battle and much waving of spear and shield, they were persuaded to march with Nyikang, and the procession again moved on to meet the king and his followers at Khor Arepejur in front of Fashoda. This 643 941 is the traditional battle ground, on which the forces of the king and those of Nyikang join in a great sham battle, both sides using corn stalks instead of spears, and fighting until the followers of Nyikang overcome the guardians of the king and capture the king to carry him away into Fashoda.

The two armies were now drawn up facing one another, the host of Nyikang awaiting to join battle with the *reth* and holding the high ground to the west of the capital.

The Battle

(P.P.H.)

As soon as the *reth* had crossed the watercourse, he and his army advanced at a fast pace in the direction of the host of Nyikang, who had remained on the high ground opposite Fashoda. When the distance between the two parties was no more than two hundred yards the shield-bearer of the king moved forward, and began to dance in a threatening manner, dodging and retreating and advancing in the direction of Nyikang. Small parties of warriors broke away brandishing their millet stalks in the air. The warlike attitude of the opposing armies became apparent. The Kwa Nyikwom who were leading the army of Nyikang began to move, and a few of them broke away in front, brandishing their whips and ropes. Women in the background cried out in exultation and encouragement, and with wild shouts and hollows the armies fell upon each other. The air was filled with flying millet stalks, and such was the confusion that it is difficult to record accurately what happened, but the *reth's* army was considered to be repelled.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

and the *reth* himself captured by Nyikang. Shortly after the first onslaught he was seen in the midst of a crowd of Kwa Nyikwom, cut off from his own followers, and as the procession moved on towards Fashoda he took up, or was forced to take up, his position under the shadow of Nyikang, clasping the effigy with both arms and the black ostrich feathers screening his face. 643 541

The eldest son of Fafiti then remarked with relief "*rony arum*," "the installation is assured", meaning that the great crisis was passed.

The Reth carried off to the Shrine by Nyikang.

The party with Nyikang and the *reth* in their midst then turned towards Fashoda, and walked slowly in the direction of the cleared space which marks the pool of Cerfuc (Note 15). The drums of Nyikang, of which there are two sets, and which accompanied Nyikang from Akurwa, were carried in front and beaten with the rhythm characteristic of the march of Nyikang. The procession drew up to the cleared space called Cerfuc and halted. In the middle were a group of people clustered together. They were the Kwa Okelo, who were engaged in wrapping the brown heifer from head to tail in white cloth (Note 16). When this had been done, they remained in the centre of the square while Nyikang, with the *reth* immediately behind him and apparently entangled in the cloth wrappings which hang down from the head of the effigy, processed three times round them. With much singing and drumming the party then faced the shrine of Nyikang, while the Kwa Okelo speared the heifer, and tore off the white wrappings, which immediately were seized and carried away by the crowds as sacred relics. 643 [514] [778]

The Enthronement and Substitution.

After the spearing of the heifer, the *reth*, still closely led by Nyikang, advanced towards the shrine. Meanwhile the canopy of white cloth, which is held up to screen the sacred stool (Note 17) of the Shilluk from 643 778

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-S (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

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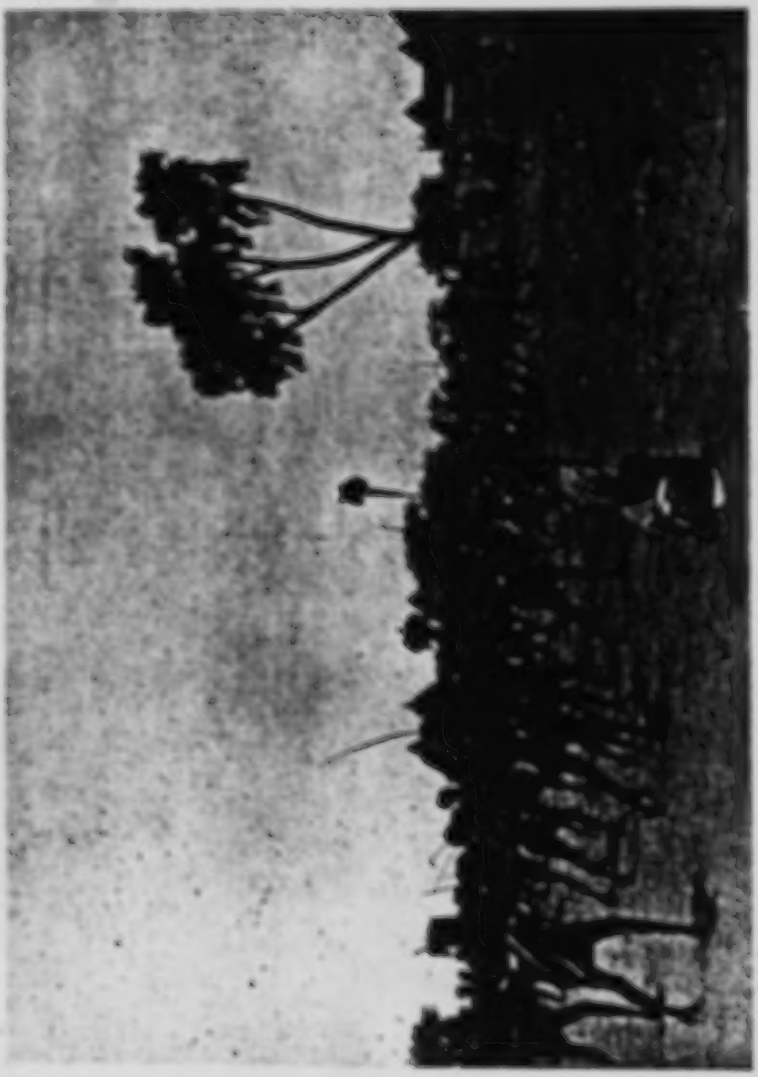

The Funeral Day of the Installation.

The army of Nyikang led by the Reu Nyikang and brandishing whips and ropes charges through Fashoda towards the rest.

[FACING p. 67]

19: Howell & Thomson E, C-5 (1943-1946) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

with news of Nyikang's refusal; but is again sent to fetch her, this time accompanied by the chief of the Gol Nyikang. On their repeating the *reth*'s demand Nyikang falls into a fury of rage and cries out that he will punish this presumptuous young upstart, who lays such outrageous demands on his property. Immediately he calls for his drummers, who beat out a tattoo summoning his warriors to war. The two envoys of the *reth* return to warn him of Nyikang's anger, and once more the two armies prepare for battle.

This is the traditional explanation of the cause of the second battle, and the tradition was faithfully enacted. Early that morning Jago Ajang of the Kwa Okel was summoned to Atarwic and was seen later searching for *eyalwer*. After talking with the Kwa Nyikwom outside the shrine he went back to Atarwic and returned accompanied by Jago Yor Leiker, the chief of Gol Nyikang. Together they entered the shrine, but hurried out almost immediately, and the drums of Nyikang began to beat. The Kwa Nyikwom and other followers of Nyikang, both male and female, clustered round the shrine, and the drummers continued to beat the drums either seated inside the withy fence, which surrounds the shrine, or walking round the whole building. An ox-hide was laid in the open space between the shrines and the temporary huts, and the drums placed thereon. Nyikang's followers began to dance and sing, the words of the song indicating that Nyikang was angered, and that the *reth* should appease him. The dance continued for some time, the dancers working themselves into a frenzy of excitement, leaping high into the air with arms stretched above them. Suddenly Nyikang and Dak appeared at the entrance of the shrine, and the army began to collect round them. Led by Dak they encircled the shrine three times, and then marched off to the hut known as *gol ongor*, where the ropes of Dak and the whips are kept. The Kwa Nyikwom armed themselves with these and moved forward towards the mound, with Dak and Nyikang at their head. At this point another effigy appeared, a smaller one with grey (female) ostrich-feathers for the head and a slim body of twined rope. This was Cal another son of Nyikang. (Note 20).

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Meanwhile the army of the *reth* was gathering below Aturwic, and the *reth*, dressed in white with a Mrs. Gray skin draped round him and five ivory bracelets on each arm, descended among them. Armed with millet stalks, they began to move slowly forwards in a threatening manner towards the army of Nyikang. When only a hundred yards separated them, a violent argument broke out about the bull, which should have been provided for the occasion to be tied down and walked over by the combatants (Note 91). Both parties retired and the *reth* went up on to the mound again, where he could be seen standing at the central entrance, a long millet stalk in his hand. Nyikang, Dak, and Cal retreated to a point just outside the shrine. After a long delay the bull was brought and placed between the two armies, who advanced, and the *reth* in front of his army walked forward to throw the first spear (millet stalk), which fell at the feet of Dak. Millet stalks began to fly, and in the general *mêlée*, the *reth* rushed forward with a small escort and wrested *nyakwer* from Nyikang, and hustled her away through the ranks of his warriors up to the mound behind them. Three furious counter-attacks followed by the Kwa Nyikwom, who dashed forward waving and whirling their ropes and whips. Finally, with Nyikang and Dak and Cal, at their head, they reached the bottom of the mound and went up to the huts on top. Shortly afterwards Nyikang and Dak descended from the mound. It was said that all hostility between Nyikang and the *reth* was now at an end, and that Nyikang had accepted him as his successor. Then they started on a tour of all the huts in Fashoda. This was considered an inspection of the houses, and those sections of Shilluk who are traditionally called upon to repair them were fined by Nyikang if they had not done so. The fines were one head of cattle each, and one chief was fined for initiating a song, the privilege of the Kwa Nyikwom. This part of the ceremonies was taken lightheartedly, and the victims subjected to much witticism.

Nyikang, Dak and Cal then retired to the shrine. They took no further part in the ceremonies and did not appear in public until

20: Thomson G-5 (1945-1946) 1948 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 The next day December 30th, *Adul*, the temporary camp outside Fashoda, was built by Jago Yorieker. This time he built both huts, and the chief of Gel Dhiang had no part.

On the 31st the *reth* and Nyikang were ready for the installation ceremonies. Nyikang and his army left Nyigir at about 9.00 a.m. and went straight to the village north of Fashoda, where they had to wait some two hours for the *reth* to start from Debaio. The army of Nyikang moved steadily this time and seldom turned back in countermarch as it had done in 1944. The *reth* was delayed ceremonially till about midday. His form of procession was similar to 1944, and the cattle which were bride-wealth for Nyakwer were observed being driven along beside his army.

There had been an abnormal White Nile flood in 1946, as in 1917 at the time of the installation of *reth* Faliti, and the Khor Arrejur, which was dry in March 1944, was now an expanse of water about 80 yards wide. When the *reth* arrived at the khor, the *Golhainy* dragged the small black bull to the southern bank. The *reth*, taking Nyakwer by the hand, stepped over the bull and into a canoe. He was paddled across the khor with Nyakwer sitting behind him, while his followers forded the stream.

As the two parties of Nyikang and the *reth* approached each other Nyikang dashed forward and captured the *reth* without a struggle and began at once to carry him off to Cerfac (*op. cit.* p.p. 61 & 78) Fashoda. This corresponded with Munro's observation in 1918 (*Sudan Notes & Records* Vol. I), but not with what we had seen in 1944, when there had been a spectacular mock battle with millet stalks. I was told that they had "made a mistake" in 1944, and also that owing to the hardness of the millet stalks they were afraid of injuring someone. This latter reason had not cancelled the fight in 1944. There is another possible reason: the *reth* himself was feeling in a state of acute personal danger, owing, as he thought, to the likelihood of someone making an attack on his life. He may have issued orders at the last moment that the battle was not to take place, in case someone should take advantage of the confusion to attack him. This seems more possible because the *reth's* army were all carrying millet stalks as they crossed the khor, as if in preparation for the mock battle.

643 The rest of the ceremonies closely followed precedent. *Reth* Dak, while enthroned on the stool was "possessed" by Nyikang, in the same way as *reth* Anei had been. He was afterwards led away to seclusion in *Adul* leading Nyakwer by the hand. An incident which may be of interest occurred while the *reth* was being led to *Adul*. The

24: Howell E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

In the meantime, I had driven along the road until, about two miles north of Fashoda, I met Nyikang, Dak and their followers moving at great speed towards the capital. I followed them for a while and then took up a good position immediately west of Fashoda in the open grass where I knew the opposing forces would meet. Nyikang soon arrived and halted, drums beating and the shield-bearer dancing forward in defiance of the *reth* and his army who were by then appearing over the crest of the northern bank of Acwejur. The *kwa* Nyikwom, armed with whips, then dashed forward and those armed with millet stalks met in a disorderly and not very spectacular clash well to the west of the main party. Then, as the *reth* and his personal guards drew near, Nyikang and Dak rushed up to him, surrounded him and bore him off towards Fashoda, while a furious battle took place between the opposing forces, the *kwa* Nyikwom lashing out with their whips without mercy.

Outside the shrine, which had been beautifully cleaned and decorated for the occasion, the royal stool (*kwom*), wrapped in white cloth, was ready. As Nyikang and his captive drew near, the white canopy was thrown around them. It was therefore not easy to see what happened, and it would have been unseemly to push behind the screen, but it was clear that the substitution had taken place a few minutes later when Nyikang withdrew into the shrine.

A short time afterwards, the *reth*'s feet were bathed and he was carried to the temporary camp opposite. He emerged again almost immediately to make passes over the bull, covered in white cloth and a leopard-skin, with the traditional weapons handed to him for the purpose, and then entered *Adul* once more, while the beast was sacrificed, falling on its side about fifty yards away. The man responsible for spearing it[a] was seen running rapidly towards the river where he must wash the blood from the blade and purify himself in the water. A fire was then lit inside one of the two small huts in the camp and water was heated in which the *reth* was bathed.[b]

This ended the first day of the installation. The *reth* was safely in seclusion within *Adul*, and although not free from danger yet, had successfully passed one of the most dangerous periods of the whole procedure. The only other ceremony performed that day was the lighting of fire outside the camp

[a] From the *kwa* Nyikwec of Limo.

[b] In conversation with Shilluk after the event, I was informed that during his stay at *Adul*, the temporary camp, the *reth* is expected to have sexual intercourse with one of his half-sisters. The custom (*kwong*) is said to derive from Dak, who, infuriated by Nyikang's action in giving his mother, Abor, to Col (or Burro, another brother), took one of his half-sisters who eventually gave birth to Okudo. Nyikang was apparently outraged by this action, but decreed that thereafter every *reth* should take one of his half-sisters. This story is recorded by Hofmayr (see Bibliography), but I had not realised that the act—a ritual breach of the rules of exogamy and called *ahudo*—actually takes place. It is also said that members of the *kwareh* have to do likewise when they are appointed chiefs (*jago*) though it is admitted that the woman is usually a more remote kinswoman than a half-sister. The act is none the less one of incest. The matter needs further investigation.

24: Howell E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 by the *ocwo* and *kwaroth* of Fashoda, a ceremony which I did not attend, though I had seen it done at the installation of *reth* Anei.

If there are any observations to be made on this day's events, they are that the whole occasion was carried out in a much less serious manner than previously. The participants appeared to be light-hearted and the dangers to the *reth*, though carefully stressed, were obviously not taken so seriously. If there is any explanation of this, it is probably that the Shilluk, who have undergone the very real strain of no less than three installations in the last seven years, are now used to these events and do not regard them with such awe as before. It is also possible that Kur, as the son of a successful and popular father, was a candidate accepted with a greater degree of unanimity and calm than either of his two immediate predecessors. The number of participants seemed much less than before, possibly for the reasons already given, and because many people from the south were barred from coming owing to cerebro-spinal meningitis. One had the impression that the number of Nyikang's followers was much greater than those of the *reth*, no doubt partially due to the latter's unexpected decision to stay only one night in Debaka and the fact that this affected his own followers rather than those of Nyikang who had marched through the northern Shilluk. Also, perhaps, because Kur, as son of Fadiet, is popular in the north while he may be less so in the south.

I was not able to attend the final ceremonies. In the account by Mr. Udal which follows, it will be seen that *reth* Kur spent only one night up in the mound of *Athurwic*, with the result that the ceremonies of installation from the point where he fled to Debaka had taken only five days instead of the customary nine.

THE FINAL CEREMONIES

(By J. O. Udal)

The Battle for Nyakwer

643 The *reth* was anxious to avoid any further delays and decided to spend only one night in *Athurwic*. The battle for *Nyakwer* thus took place on the third day of the installation ceremonies, not on the fourth as is usual. I arrived at about 8 a.m. on the morning of the third day and was able to exchange greetings with the *reth* from a distance although he could not leave *Athurwic: jago* Yorkiker *wad* Ajang thought that the battle would begin very soon, but the inevitable delays followed and it was not until about 9.15 a.m. that Nyikang's drum was heard being beaten in his shrine. The *kwa* Nyikwom began to assemble outside the shrine from which Nyikang and Dak soon emerged and with them *Nyakwer*, dressed in a Mrs. Gray antelope skin. *Nyakwer* is the central figure of the second battle. In the morning, the *reth*, remembering *Nyakwer*, whom he had forsaken for a girl of the *ocwo*, sent for her. The news was brought that Nyikang had abducted her and an ultimatum was forthwith sent by the *reth* to Nyikang demanding her immediate return. Both sides then prepared for battle.

24: Howell E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Thus Nyikang emerged from his shrine in an angry mood. The people fell in procession behind the effigies and, dancing and singing, circled the shrine and then set off for the *pal Ongor* where the whips of the two Nyikwaro are stored. Both Nyikang and Dak entered this house, and when they came out again a third effigy, that of Cal,* was with them. Cal was the brother of Dak and his effigy is made with grey (female) ostrich feathers in contrast to the black feathers of the others. The drum began to beat louder and faster, the singing increased in tempo and all the time the crowds gathered. Simultaneously at the other end of Fashoda, the *reth's* forces were gathering round the mound, the *reth's* police in their scarlet *kaus* again conspicuous on the left flank.

There followed a succession of rallies by the assembled forces of Nyikang and the *reth* from opposite ends of the capital. First Nyikang would surge forward and the shield-bearer of the *reth* would conduct the temporary retirement of the *reth's* forces, rattling the bells inside the shield in defiance of Nyikang. Then it would be the turn of the *reth's* followers to advance menacingly and for Nyikang to withdraw in the same manner. Finally a bull was brought forward to be cast on the ground so that the *reth* could step over it before going on to seize *Nyakwar*.* Once again the casting was mismanaged and with a disdainful wave of his hand, the *reth* motioned to his retainers to drag the bull out of the way, and swept on to seize *Nyakwar* from the clutches of Nyikang. Millet stalks began to fly and as the *reth's* party returned to the safety of *Ashworic*, an unsuccessful counter-attack was staged by Nyikang. Its failure was obvious and the drummer then beat the retreat of Nyikang and his men towards the shrine. They did not enter it immediately and although Nyikang had never reached the summit of the mound, he and his followers marched round the shrine and appeared to be about to renew the onslaught. Such forces of the *reth* as remained on the ground seemed to melt away into the host of Nyikang, but somehow the new attack never materialised, despite much drumming and singing, marching and counter-marching for a period of some ten minutes, while the *reth's* guard stood watch on the slopes of *Ashworic*. Nyikang, tired of the proceedings, finally withdrew into his shrine, while Dak, Cil and his supporters, perhaps disappointed, gathered outside to sing and dance his praises. The battle for *Nyakwar* had ended.

Speech Day

The sequel of events on this occasion followed former precedents. The *reth* came down from *Ashworic* surrounded by the *ororo* and sat down on the covered stool, while a fan made from one wing of a saddle bill stork was held to shade him. He did not, however, step over a sheep as had happened at previous installations. The chiefs of the country, with the exception of those from the east bank who had been discouraged from ascending on account of the epidemic of cerebro-spinal meningitis there, sat opposite the *reth* on the ground at about twenty-five yards distance.

* See Howell and Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
* *Ibid.* p. 79, Note 21.

27: Munro U-5 (1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Unfortunately I was unable to stay longer, and as the actual religious ceremonies had been safely completed, I asked Tombeki Hussein Farag, Hamur Kodak, to return to Fashoda on the 20th and take note of any further ceremonies. The following information is from notes given to me by him: "Apparently the Ret went up to his palace from the "temporary hut" during the night of the 19th. On the 20th in the morning the Ret left his palace accompanied by a large crowd. He was dressed in a goat skin, and with him was the sacred stool. His escort were holding the shield. Nyakang also left his shrine escorted by a great company of people. Then there occurred the mock battle with dura stalks[1]. When the two armies met, the Ret's people as though frightened of the people of Nyakang, ran towards the palace. The young girl of Kwa Ohit on this day was with Nyakang's people, and when the "battle" was joined, the Ret seized her and carried her off to his palace.

"Nyakang then returned to the Shrine, where he is said to remain till the rainy season. Four persons are left as his escort.

"The Ret is said to stay another three days in his palace and then come out and greet his chiefs. Every orator speaks in his turn and before talking puts his spear on the ground. If his speech sounds good to the people, the drum is beaten as a token of applause. The spears laid down become the property of the Ret. The young girl stays with the Ret till she grows up, and the Ret can then wed her to any Shilluk he pleases."

P. Munro.

Malakal, February 1918.

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[1] Seligman (p. 101) states the mock battle occurs at the khor before the ceremony. No dura stalks were used on the 17th at the time of the mock fight seen by me. It would appear to be one of those instances in which different installations vary.